

7-14-1998

# The Relationship Between Job Satisfaction and Job Tenure

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The Relationship Between Job Satisfaction and Job Tenure

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirement for the degree of  
Master of Social work

AUGSBURG COLLEGE  
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

August, 1998



MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK  
AUGSBURG COLLEGE  
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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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Date of Oral Presentation: July 14, 1998

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Thesis Reader: Becky Heilskov-Miller

This study is dedicated to my mother who died in 1966 and  
to my father. This study is also dedicated to all those  
individuals who struggle to find their self-worth and their  
place in the world.

"An instant realization sees endless time.

Endless time is as one moment.

When one comprehends the endless moment,

He realizes the person who is seeing it."

Zen Prophecy

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Among all the challenges I have faced in my life, the challenge of completing graduate school has been one of the most formidable. I do know that I could not have met this challenge without the support and encouragement of many people. I would first and foremost like to thank my wife, Lisa and my sons, Calvin and Clayton. Without their selfless sacrifice and belief in me, this would not have been possible. I would also like to thank a kind and caring friend, John Upshaw. Together we met this venture head on. Thank you John. Without you there, I would not have made it. You truly are a friend. I would also like to thank Dr. Maria Dinis. Your willingness, compassion, wisdom and empathy allowed me to see that there are others who have had to sacrifice much to meet this challenge and that the best thing I could do was to persevere. Finally, thank you God. I spent many hours praying to you for your guidance strength and as always, my prayers were answered. Your spirit and ever shining light has guided me down the path to accomplishment and to the beginning of yet another journey in my life.

## Abstract

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Job Satisfaction and Job Retention

Department of Social Work, Augsburg College

This exploratory quantitative study was conducted to ascertain the correlation between job satisfaction and job retention among employees from two different job settings. Seventy employees, thirty five from a public social service and thirty five from a private social service setting, completed a modified Job Satisfaction Survey developed by Paul E. Spector. The employee's responses to questions were developed to measure 9 facets of job satisfaction which were correlated with the demographic information of length of employment with their current employer. The intent was to determine, if any, the prominent characteristics that explain the reasons for their length of tenure and the relationship to the overall job satisfaction for each employee. The facets that were most significant in the association with job tenure were communication, coworkers, contingent rewards and supervision. Overall, findings indicated a strong association between job satisfaction and job tenure and in job satisfaction and job category. Implications for social work practice were also discussed.

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# The Relationship Between Job Satisfaction and Job Tenure

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the issue of job satisfaction and how it relates to job tenure for workers. This chapter will further identify some of the current trends of job tenure specifically related to a public social service and a private social service agency. Finally, this chapter will conclude with the purpose of this exploratory and descriptive study as well as identify the research question.

#### Background of the Problem

There is currently a growing national concern to the continuing decline of job tenure among workers in various work settings (BLS, 1997). Overall, nearly every age group of men has experienced a decline in median job tenure since 1983. Among women, the overall median tenure has risen since 1983 (BLS, 1997). Taking into consideration the two work settings of public social services and private social services, statistics reveal contradictions. In private social services, a rise in the median tenure was reported from 2.5 years to 3.0 years since 1983. There was also a rise in the median job tenure among public social services

workers from 5.8 years to 6.9 years since 1983 (BLS, 1997).

#### Statement of the Problem

The question arises then, that if there is an overall decrease in the median job tenure of workers nationally, why then has there been an increase among workers in the work settings of private social services and public services? Why is the job satisfaction among the workers in these work settings increasing? This research study will investigate the various facets of job satisfaction among workers in the two job settings of public social services and private social services as well as identify which facets rated higher among these workers.

#### Purpose and Significance of the Research Problem

Most theories of job tenure view it as the result of employee job satisfaction (Spector, 1997). A general representation of a satisfying work role appears to be one of high pay, promotional opportunities, considerate and participative supervision, interaction with one's peers, varied duties, control over one's work methods and work pace (Vroom, 1964). With the current rise of job tenure of workers, it is important to understand what facets of the overall job satisfaction have contributed to this increase.

The purpose of this study is to find out what the relationship is between job satisfaction and job tenure

among workers in the North Central Iowa area. This study will explore and identify what facets of job satisfaction contribute to job tenure among workers from the two job settings of public social services and private social services in the North Central Iowa area. The potential significance of the study's findings will be to provide implications for employers and human resource personnel in the two work settings. This study will further provide a heightened understanding of the facets of job satisfaction that are perceived as significant for the increase of job tenure for the workers in these work settings. The findings can serve as a valuable indicator for human resource professionals in the North Central Iowa area that identify areas in the work settings that could be enhanced to possibly increase their worker's overall job tenure.

#### Research Question

The research question studied was: What is the relationship between job satisfaction and job tenure of worker's in the North Central Iowa area in the work settings of public social services and private social services?

#### Summary

This chapter has outlined the prevalence of job satisfaction to job tenure. In order to further address

the relationship between job satisfaction and job tenure among workers, this study will explore the individual worker perceptions in the two work settings of private social service and public social service agencies. Chapter two will outline the theoretical framework and work adjustment theory that guided this research study. Chapter three will discuss a review of the literature regarding job satisfaction and job tenure. Chapter four explains the methodology. Chapter five will present the results, including a summary of the findings. Finally, I will apply the findings of the study in relation to the theoretical framework and the literature reviewed. Limitations of the study, implications to social work practice and future research recommendations will conclude chapter six.

## CHAPTER II

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter describes the Work Adjustment theory. It will further explain how the work environment and the individual worker's interactions influence the degree of job satisfaction that the worker will experience. This chapter will further discuss how the Work Adjustment theory applies to this research study. Finally, this chapter will conclude with a summary.

#### Work Adjustment Theory

Before going into specifics regarding the Work Adjustment theory, it is necessary to identify the primary concepts of the theory. The theory of Work adjustment is based on the premise of *correspondence or the interaction* between the individual worker and the work environment. This relationship's harmony, suitability of the worker to the environment, agreement between the worker and the environment and the degree to which the individual and the environment reciprocally compliment one another are all central to this theory (Dawis & Loftquist, 1984). The theory can be further summarized into the following statements:

- Work is defined by the interchange between an



individual and the work environment (Dawis & Loftquist, 1984).

- The work environment requires that certain tasks be performed, utilizing the skills the individual has to perform the tasks (Dawis & Loftquist, 1984).
- The worker requires compensation and certain preferred working conditions (Dawis & Loftquist, 1984).
- Both the worker and the environment must continually meet one another's requirements for interaction or correspondence to be maintained (Dawis & Loftquist, 1984).
- Work adjustment is the process of developing and maintaining correspondence. This is identified by the degree of *satisfaction* the worker has of the environment and the environment has of the worker. This is further determined by the *satisfactoriness* of the individual (Dawis & Loftquist, 1984).
- *Satisfaction* and *satisfactoriness* produce or end up as *tenure* (Dawis & Loftquist, 1984).
- Work personalities and work environments can be defined by their *structure* and *style* variables that can be measured by the same dimensions (Dawis & Loftquist, 1984).

When reviewing these statements, three themes arise. They are individual worker, work environment and work personality. These three themes will be further defined and discussed in the following sections.

#### Individual worker

How the individual reacts to the stimuli of the work environment as well as the individual's actions on the environment are of key importance. These actions and reactions are determined by the individual and the skills and personality traits they bring to the work setting. This is further determined by how well the individual is able to adapt to the environment and meet the requirements the environment places on the individual. This is called *correspondence* (Dawis & Loftquist, 1984). An internal indicator to this favorable or unfavorable correspondence is called *satisfaction*. Therefore, job satisfaction represents the individual worker's assessment as to how the environment meets their individual requirements (Dawis & Loftquist, 1984). An outcome to an individual's positive assessment of satisfaction is called *tenure*, which is the time an individual remains in the work environment.

#### Work environment

The work environment is the place where the work takes place. The environment is defined by several factors.

These factors are the tasks to be performed, the tools and materials used, job title, and compensation (Dawis & Loftquist, 1984). The work environment can further include how it meets the needs of the individual through its physical environment and the more abstract characteristics of skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, job feedback and job scope (Spector, 1997). When the worker meets the requirements of the work environment, this is defined as *satisfactoriness*.

The work environment can further be defined in similar terms to that of the work personality. There are similar dimensions such as work environment *structure* and work environment *style*. Work environment structure can be described in terms of the skills required to perform a task or tasks and the need reinforcers or the ability to maintain a response and future responses. Work environment style can be defined by the speed it takes to complete a task, the level of activity, the pattern of pace and duration or endurance (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984).

#### Work personality

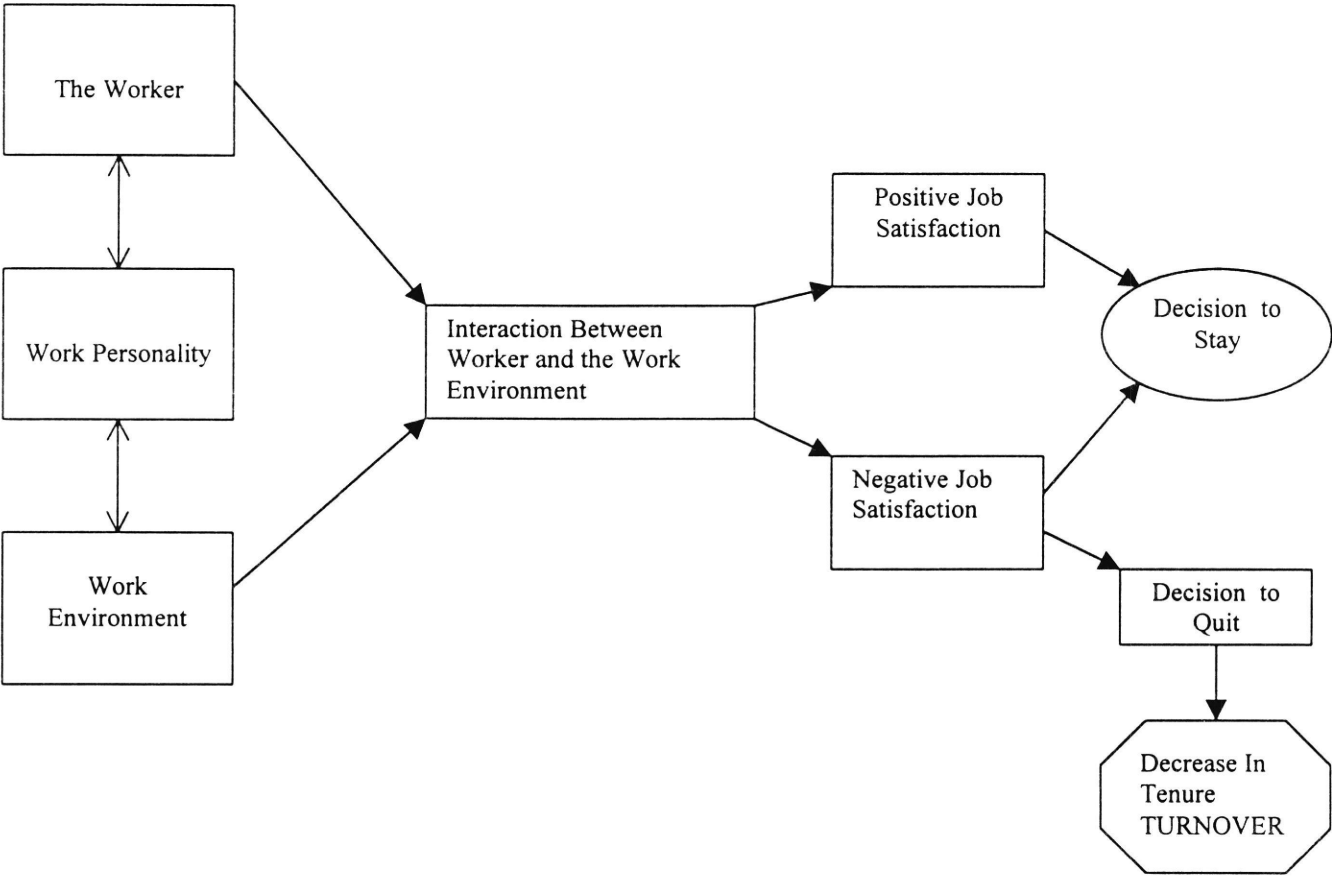
The work personality is the principal characteristics of the individual in relation to the work environment

(Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). The work personality maintains two primary characteristics, *structure* and *style*. Personality structure is described in terms of the individual skills, needs, abilities and values. Personality style describes how the individual interacts with the work environment through the speed of interaction within the work environment, the level of activity displayed in their interaction within the environment, the pattern of pace when interacting within the environment and the length of time the individual interacts with the environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). The work personality, like the work environment, is determined in similar ways. Both are described in terms of structure and style.

#### Application of Work Adjustment Theory

The focus of this study is to determine what is the relationship between job satisfaction and tenure. The Work Adjustment theory is what is identified as a global theory. Simply stated, this theory takes into consideration all the variables involved in the worker and work setting relationship. Figure 2.2 shows the interchange of this relationship and how it leads to the outcome of tenure. These variables may be concrete or abstract. Within this theoretical framework, all perspectives are considered.

Figure 2.1: Work Adjustment Theory: The Study Model of Worker & Work Environment Interchange and Job Tenure



The individual perspective, the work environment perspective and the work personality perspective are assessed to determine the degree of work adjustment or the ongoing process of correspondence between the worker and the work environment. The theme throughout the study is to determine what the individual's perspective is in their own assessment of the work environment and whether it is allowing them to meet their own obligations to the correspondence or interchange. Obtaining and assessing the individual's perspective can denote a need for further investigation as to whether the work environment is meeting the requirements for a positive and productive interchange with the worker. We also discussed how the concept of job tenure is determined by the satisfaction and satisfactoriness of the worker and the environment.

#### Summary

In this chapter, the Work Adjustment theory was discussed as a way of understanding the importance of job satisfaction and its relation to job tenure. We have seen that there are several perspectives to the worker and job environment. The following chapter will look at these different perspectives and define them more specifically.

## CHAPTER III

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The following chapter reviews and summarizes literature regarding job satisfaction and how it is defined. There has been various research studies conducted on job satisfaction. Though each study was unique, they maintained similarities in their overall themes. This chapter will also discuss job tenure and its definition. Literature reviewed will also identify the relationship between job satisfaction and job tenure. This chapter will incorporate the reviewed literature into themes identified. The themes discussed are: job satisfaction, the global determinants of the individual and the environment that make up job satisfaction. I will then discuss job tenure and the relationship it has with job satisfaction. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the themes reviewed in the literature.

#### Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is the result of an individual's requirements being fulfilled by the work environment. An internal indicator of conformity; an individual worker's appraisal of the extent their requirements are fulfilled by

the working environment (Dawis & Loftquist, 1984). Another definition that summarizes the above describes job satisfaction as an affective state describing feelings about one's work (Arches, 1991). There appears to be agreement that the individual worker's perceptions and responses determine job satisfaction by the interactions the worker has within the working environment. What is the context of these interactions or what are the characteristics that promote the individual worker to determine the degree of satisfaction within their chosen profession?

The above definitions state that the degree of job satisfaction an individual has in their work is based on how the worker "feels" their expectations in their job is being met. This is simply not determined solely on how concrete needs such as physical and psychological factors are being fulfilled. Cognitive processes also need to be considered as well. This is identified as an attitudinal perspective, which is supported by many researchers today (Spector, 1997). Therefore, job satisfaction is an attitudinal feeling about your job and the many aspects of that job.

Before we can define these "attitudinal feelings", it is important to look at the determinants that affect one's



perception of job satisfaction. In this study, job satisfaction is determined by assessing the facets or the workplace variables that affect one's job satisfaction (Arches, 1991). There are many different facets to assessing job satisfaction. Many studies have identified various facets. Figure 3.1 lists some of the most popular facets used in previous past studies of job satisfaction (Spector, 1997). The following will look at the determinants of job satisfaction.

#### Global Determinants of Job Satisfaction

There are different variables to job satisfaction. Since job satisfaction is a "feeling" about one's work, it is necessary to determine what aspects of our job influence our overall satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Past studies have categorized these variables or determinants in many different ways. One such study categorized these determinants into the four areas of psychological, physical, social and organizational determinants (Pines & Aronson, 1988). Another study identified these global determinants into the 3 key areas of the job, work context and individual characteristics (Butler, 1989). Research into the various studies has concluded that there are 4 key determinants to job satisfaction. They are identified as rewards, other people, nature of the work and

Table 3.1: Common Job Satisfaction Facets

---

Appreciation
Communication
Coworkers
Fringe benefits
Job conditions
Nature of the work itself
Organization itself
Organization's policies and procedures
Pay
Personal growth
Promotional opportunities
Recognition
Security
Supervision

---

organizational context (Locke, 1976). What all of the studies agree upon is that there are internal and external forces that influence the individuals perceived degree of job satisfaction.

Taking the literature into consideration, these global determinants can be grouped into two major categories. First, the job environment and the factors associated with the job. The second category is the individual factors of the worker (Spector, 1997). The following will discuss these two categories in more detail.

#### Environmental Factors of Job Satisfaction

The work environment has been a subject of importance in previous studies of job satisfaction. Many different characteristics or facets of the work environment have been identified as influential in the worker's perception of their overall job satisfaction in the work they do. Facets such as salary, working conditions, feelings of accomplishment and work with colleagues have been identified (Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991). Still others have identified the facets of supervision, advancement and the type of agency as environmental issues of importance to the individual's job satisfaction (Butler, 1990).

Whatever the study, there are various different facets identified in the work environment as influential to the

degree of job satisfaction individual workers will experience. Below, I have identified the eight environmental antecedents that influence the individual's perceived degree of job satisfaction. They are organizational constraints, role variables, work - family conflict, pay, job stress, workload, control and work schedules (Spector, 1997). It is the interaction of the environment and the individual that appears to be an important influence on employee job satisfaction (Kristof, 1996).

#### Organizational constraints

The elements of the job environment that contribute to worker job satisfaction are identified as organizational constraints. These elements come from many guises of the job including coworkers and the physical work environment (Peters, O'Connor & Randolph, 1980). Employees who perceive high levels of constraints within the organization tend to show lower levels of satisfaction in their work (Spector, 1997).

Several studies have found a significant correlation between pay, promotion, supervision and the work performed to organizational constraints (Arches, 1991; Basset, 1994; Butler, 1990; Jayaratne & Chess, 1984; Spector, 1997; Steen, 1997; Vinokur-Kaplan, 1991). One particular study

concluded that work related variables influence general life satisfaction and that extra workplace variables had more influence on job satisfaction. More specifically, work related variables, either subjective or objective, such as job satisfaction, job tenure and occupational prestige contributed to greater life satisfaction. Where as extra workplace variables, either subjective or objective, such as health, geographic stratum, sex, race, education and other demographic variables contributed to greater job satisfaction as a whole (Rice, Near & Hunt, 1979). Whatever, the study, the organization does play a key role in determining the degree of worker satisfaction.

#### Role variables

Another way to examine the interchange between the worker and the environment is by the role of the individual in that environment (Katz & Kahn, 1978). A role is a pattern of behavior for the worker in the work environment (Spector, 1997). When the worker experiences conflict to their identified or perceived roles in the environment is when job satisfaction declines. Issues such as role ambiguity, the degree of certainty the worker has about their tasks or responsibilities, and role conflict, when the worker experiences discordant demands regarding their tasks or responsibilities are all common influences to

dissatisfaction (Spector, 1997). The reduction of these variables, role conflict and role ambiguity, could improve job satisfaction dramatically with minimal changes to the environment by clearly defining the job and increasing the comfort of the work environment (Jayaratne & Chess, 1984).

#### Work - family conflict

Work - family conflict arises when demands of the worker's family and the job intercede with one another (Spector, 1997). Workers experience a large degree of work-family conflict (Hugick & Leonard, 1991). Work demands more time today due to changes in the work environment. It is also more intensive. This places more stress and demand on the worker to the point where they must tax their personal time outside of work to meet these additional demands. If the worker has children and a significant other in their life, these increasing work demands will surely place this individual in conflict with their family (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). The reduction of work - family conflict can be achieved by implementing more family friendly policies such as child care and flexible hours (Spector, 1997).

#### Pay

Many studies conflict on the issue of compensation for the work performed (Steen, 1997; Jayaratne & Chess, 1984;

and Spector, 1997). However, the equity, in the amount of pay between workers does appear to have some significance. Workers need to perceive that the policies and procedures involving pay are administered in a fair and equitable means (Spector, 1997).

### Job stress

We all experience varying degrees of stress on the job. How we respond emotionally or physically as well as how we reduce the factors that cause job stress is important (Spector, 1997). Job stress is a condition or event at work that requires an adaptive response by the worker. Job strain is the response to the job stressor (Jex & Beehr, 1991). Job stress has been the most studied area involving job dissatisfaction and does need attention in its reduction if the goal is attaining higher degrees of job satisfaction (Jayaratne & Chess, 1984).

### Workload

Workload is the demands placed on the individual by the work environment (Spector, 1997). There are two types of workloads. Qualitative workload is the physical and mental effort required to complete the job tasks. Quantitative workload is the amount of work done by the individual (Spector, 1997). Several studies have agreed that there is a high correlation between workload and job satisfaction

(Jayaratne & Chess, 1984; Arches, 1991 & Maslach & Leiter, 1997).

### Control

Control is the franchise given to the individual to make decisions about their work (Spector, 1997). This also would include aspects of the work environment that have little to do directly with the individual. The limited control of the individual to their own work tasks is identified as autonomy (Spector, 1997). The loss of autonomy has a significant correlation to job satisfaction. Loss of autonomy contributes to increased job stress and strain (Jex & Beehr, 1991). How much autonomy an individual has is strongly determined by the work environment and by the type of work environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984).

### Work schedules

Work schedules are defined by the amount of time the individual gives to their work. The degree of those hours in length, shift and flexibility play a significant role in determining the degree of satisfaction experienced by the individual. Behaviors that have stemmed from conflicts with work schedules, and influenced the individual's job satisfaction, have been substance abuse, sleep disturbances, accidents, health concerns, stress and an



increase in job dissatisfaction (Spector, 1997). Work schedules also play a significant role in the potential for job burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 1997).

#### Individual Determinants of Job Satisfaction

The second determinant of job satisfaction is the individual. Two primary personal antecedents of job satisfaction that we will discuss are the individual worker's personality and the person - job fit. Since job satisfaction is determined by the interchange that takes place between the work environment and the individual, it is important to look at the influences the individual brings to the work (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984 & Butler, 1990).

#### Personality Traits

The individual's personality that influences their job satisfaction is made up by the skills, abilities, needs, values and experiences (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). The work environment's action or expectations on the individual, the initiation of a response or reaction from the individual also add to this personality. This response behavior from the individual has already been formed by the individual's previous experiences, values, skill development and by their needs. An individual's locus of control determines how they will respond. One study further adds, some people have increased levels of negative affectivity which is a

personality variable that affects the degree of negative emotions the individual will experience from job stress (Spector, 1997). However defined, past studies have shown that personality plays a significant role in the individuals perceived job satisfaction (Spector, 1997).

#### Person - Job Fit

How the job is designed and how they meet the characteristics of the individual and their expectations is viewed as important to the overall job satisfaction of the individual (Spector, 1997). One study examined the importance in identifying organizational culture and individual personality characteristics. The organization's values and the individual's values were matched. The closer the match, the greater the likelihood that that individual would remain with that organization. Therefore, for the individual to show a greater degree of satisfaction and attachment to the organization, both task competency and congruency in value systems between the individual and the organization need to be present. The organization also needs to select individuals who fit a given situation which would include task and cultural requirements (O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991). Past research findings have concluded that when a job provides a high degree of task variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy,

feedback and the individual has a high growth need, job satisfaction is more likely (Butler, 1990). Therefore, one can conclude that the closer the match between the individual's abilities to do a specific job, the requirements to the job, the individuals match to the culture and values of the organization, the more likely the individual is to be satisfied in their work. The worker must also have the desire to acquire these abilities for their own enhanced job satisfaction.

#### Job Tenure

Job tenure is an outcome or result of employee job satisfaction (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). The characteristics combined with the characteristics of the work environment determine the level of job satisfaction. The higher the job satisfaction, the greater likelihood of increased tenure (Spector, 1997). Several studies have attempted to determine what facets of the work environment increased the overall tenure of the individual. The key facets of the environment that played a significant role in promoting individual tenure were appreciation, communication, coworkers, job conditions, the nature of the work, the organization and its policies and procedures, personal growth, promotional opportunities, recognition and supervision (Weisbord, 1987). The individual disposition

also determines the overall tenure of the individual. One past study showed that those employees that had favorable dispositions but worked in unfavorable work environments, had higher turnover rates than the workers with more negative dispositions (Spector, 1997). Recent statistics have shown a decline of job tenure among workers in various work settings (BLS, 1997). These same statistics, however, have shown an increase in the tenure of workers in the working environments of public social services and private social services (BLS, 1997).

Another study has outlined the importance in the match between the congruency between the person and the organization. The degree to which individual preferences matched organizational realities was predictive of tenure as well (O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991).

#### Summary

In this chapter, job satisfaction and the determinants of the work environment and the individual were discussed. The literature reviewed identified the many different facets to these determinants that affect the perceived degree of the individual's job satisfaction. This chapter also discussed job tenure and its relationship to job satisfaction. We have seen that job satisfaction is a result of the relationship between the work environment and

the individual. Whether that satisfaction is positive or negative can be determined by assessing the individual facets to the job based from the worker's perspective. Finally, we also discussed how past research has determined job tenure to be the result of job satisfaction.

## CHAPTER IV

### METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the methodology used to conduct the research is discussed. In the previous chapter, the literature reviewed discussed job satisfaction. The global determinants and the facets specific to determining the degree of job satisfaction were presented. We also discussed job tenure and how an individual worker's perceived satisfaction to their job influenced their overall job tenure. This chapter identifies the research question, research design, definition of the key terms, description of the data collection instrumentation utilized, data analysis and protection of human subjects.

#### Research Design

This study was limited to two types of work settings in the North Central Iowa area. The two settings were a private social service agency and a public social service agency. To answer the research question, the research design is inductive and quantitative; using exploratory research methods to interview workers employed in the two work settings. The study used a self-administered survey in the data collection.

The strengths, survey research possess, are two-fold.

First, this type of research allows for the use of large samples. Second, is that it allows the researcher to make descriptive claims regarding a particular population. Therefore, the findings tend to be more generalized and reliable.

There are also several weaknesses to survey research. First, the context of the social life of the participants, is not always captured by the study. Second, variables, deemed important by the participant are not always seen the same way by the researcher. Finally, because survey research looks at a particular point in time, the research may not be valid after the research is completed. Therefore, survey research is strong on reliability but weak in validity (Rubin & Babbie, 1997).

#### Research Question

The research question studied was:

What is the relationship between job satisfaction and job tenure?

#### Identification of Variables

For the research question, what is the relationship between job satisfaction and job tenure, the independent variable would be job satisfaction and the dependent variable would be job tenure.

## Conceptualization & Operationalization

### Conceptual Definition of Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a set of favorable or unfavorable feelings with which employees view their work (Davis & Newstrom, 1985). Therefore, as applied to this study, job satisfaction is the worker's perspective as to how they feel about their job. Specifically, those feelings regarding the pay, promotional opportunities, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, coworkers, the nature of the work and the communication within their respective agencies.

### Operational Definition of Job Satisfaction

The characteristics of job satisfaction include both environmental and individual influences. The environmental influences of organizational constraints, role variables, work-family conflict, pay, job stress, workload, control and work schedules are the characteristics that affect the workers overall perception of job satisfaction. The individual influences of job-worker fit and worker personality are the second primary characteristic affecting job satisfaction (Spector, 1997).

Applied to this research project, the individual worker's perceptions to the facets of pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating



conditions, coworkers, nature of work and communication are assessed to determine the individual's overall job satisfaction. This is compared to the length of time the worker has been with their current employer. Tenure is defined as the stability in the relationship between the individual and the work environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984).

### Study Population

This was an intensive survey of cross-sectional population of workers from two work settings. The study used responses from 35 workers from a private social service agency and 35 workers from a public social service agency. All workers from the two work settings were from three various positions. Approximately 11 from each setting were line workers, 11 from each setting were clerical/support staff and 11 from each setting were management/administration. The two work settings are located in the North Central Iowa area.

### Sampling Procedures

This study used a non-probability sampling of two work settings in the North Central Iowa area. The samples of workers were obtained through a voluntary recruitment. A roster of employees was obtained from the administration at the respective agency. A consent letter explaining the

study a demographic form and a copy of the satisfaction survey was sent to the participants based on their position within the agency. A self addressed stamped envelope was also enclosed so that the completed demographic form and the completed survey could be returned. The agencies were chosen based on their size and the various numbers of employees in various positions within the work setting.

#### Measurement

In this study, the following variables are used: job satisfaction and job tenure. Both are discrete, interval levels of measurement. The instrument used in this study was the Job Satisfaction Survey (see appendix A) (Spector, 1997). There are two types of reliability estimates utilized to evaluate this scale. First, internal consistency or co-efficient alphas ranged from .60 for the coworker sub-scale to .91 for the total scale. These ranges were from a sample of 3,067 individuals who completed the JSS. With the minimum standard for internal consistency being .60, the coworker sub-scale rated somewhat low. The second estimate, test - retest yielded a range of .37 to .74, which reflects the reliability of the stability on the scale over an 18-month period. Validity for job satisfaction scales is provided by studies that compared different scales with one another on the same

employees. Five of the JSS sub-scales, pay, promotion, supervision, coworkers and nature of work, correlate well with similar sub-scales which ranged from .61 for coworkers to .80 for supervision (Spector, 1997).

#### Instrumentation

The Job Satisfaction Survey was developed by Paul Spector to assess nine facets of job satisfaction as well as for overall job satisfaction (Spector, 1997). The scale contains 36 items and uses a summated rating scale format. Each of the nine facet sub-scales contains four items, and a total satisfaction score can be calculated by combining all of these items.

#### Data Collection

The researcher contacted the lead administrators of the participating agencies by telephone and explained the overall intent and purpose of the study. It was explained that the study was meant to be voluntary and that the workers would be given an honorarium for their time. A letter of support by the administrator or the human source officer was requested. A letter of consent was provided to the participants explaining the research project and explaining their participation in the study. The data collected assessed nine facets of job satisfaction on each of the 70 workers who participated. Demographic

information was also collected to determine variations in positions of responsibility in the work setting and the number of years employed in their current work setting.

#### Data Analysis

The quantitative data, which was obtained through the Job Satisfaction Survey, was scored according to the job facets of pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, coworkers, nature of work, and communication. Individual facet scores and the individual overall scores were entered into the SPSS program as variables. The variables of years with the current employer and the current position in that agency were also entered into the program. Once the data was entered, a multi-method approach for analysis of the data was utilized. These approaches consisted of non-parametric statistical tests and descriptive statistics.

#### Protection of Human Subjects

Ethical protections were utilized to protect the individual participants and to minimize overall risk. The first procedure of protection of human subjects included an approval from the Institutional Review Board at Augsburg College (IRB #97-54-03). A letter of support was obtained from the participating agencies before the research began. For the purposes of this study, no anxiety or stress is

anticipated. Possible risks could include awareness to the individual worker's degree of dissatisfaction in their job. The following precautions were taken to minimize risk to the participants:

1. Identities of the respondents remain anonymous and are not revealed.
2. The participation in the study is voluntary and the individual can choose to withdraw from the study at any time.
3. Employees at the various positions are encouraged to participate in the study including superiors and subordinates.
4. Only the researcher had access to the research data. The data will be destroyed after January 1, 1999.

#### Summary

Employees from two work settings were surveyed on their degree of job satisfaction using the Job Satisfaction Survey and a demographic survey. The data was entered into the statistical computer program for analysis. The following chapter will discuss the results of the surveys.

## CHAPTER V

### RESULTS

The following chapter will present the results of this study. The chapter will begin with a review of the information of the participants. The demographic data will be presented. The research question will then be answered with the results by comparing the means and ranges within the context of the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables. Box plots were used to provide visual graphic support to this relationship. Then, non-parametric statistical testing outcomes are presented as evidence to the correlation in the relationship. A summary will conclude this chapter.

#### Respondent Information

The study population consisted of 70 total workers. Two groups of 35 workers were from one of two work settings, a private social service agency and a public social service agency. In each of the two work settings and of the 35 total participants in each particular work setting, approximately nine participants represented one of five work positions, line worker, clerical/support staff, management, administrator or technical/support staff. The participants were all permanent employees of their

respective agency.

### Demographics

In the table 5.1, demographics are listed according to what agency the participants were employed, the job category maintained by the respondents and the length of tenure. Among the 70 total surveys sent to the two agencies, a total of 46 were returned. Of the 35 total surveys sent to the public social service agency, 30 were returned which is a response rate of 86%. Of the 35 surveys sent to the private social service agency, 16 were returned which was 46% response rate for that agency. The percentages of overall responses according to the five job categories were 46% worker, 20% clerical/support staff, 20% supervisor/manager, 7% administrator and 9% technical/support staff.

### Research Question

What is the relationship between job satisfaction and job tenure?

### Job Satisfaction by Agency

Job satisfaction scores were calculated by the mean according to their frequency in the categories of agency and by job category (see Table 5.1). The range for job satisfaction was calculated per facet and by an overall rating. To determine the degree of satisfaction per facet,

Table 5.1: Demographic Information by Agency (in percent)  
(N=46)

Demographic Category	Public Agency n=30	Private Agency n=16
Surveys Returned	86	46
Job Category		
Direct service staff 13		63
Clerical/Support	17	25
Management/Supervision	17	25
Administration	7	6
Technical/support staff 13		7
Tenure Categories		
1. 0 - 7 years	33	31
2. 8 - 14 years	27	38
3. 15 - 21 years	23	25
4. 22 - 27 years	17	6



each facet had a scoring range from 4 - 24. Three was the least satisfied and 24 being the highest degree of satisfaction. To determine the overall job satisfaction score, the total satisfaction score for each of the nine facets were added together. The range for the overall job satisfaction was 36 for the lowest degree of satisfaction and 216 for the highest degree of overall satisfaction.

#### Public Agency Job Satisfaction

The overall job satisfaction scores for the public agency ranged from the lowest score of 97 to the highest score of 189. The highest concentration of respondents, 95%, fell within the range of 126 to 147. The mean score was 137 and the median score 129. Therefore, the overall job satisfaction for the respondents in the public agency were moderately satisfied with their jobs.

#### Private Agency Job Satisfaction

Among the respondents in the private agency, overall job satisfaction scores ranged from the lowest score of 77 to the highest score of 189. The mean score for the private agency was 135 with the median score 128. Like the public agency, the respondents were moderately satisfied with their jobs.

#### Overall Job Satisfaction by Job Category

Table 5.2 shows the overall job satisfaction scores

Table 5.2: Job Satisfaction Mean Scores by Agency Type

Job Satisfaction Category	Public Agency (30)	Private Agency (16)
Overall Job Satisfaction*	137	135
Job Category*		
Direct service staff	128	97
Clerical/Support	134	137
Manager/Supervisor	173	140
Administrator	189	176
Technical/support staff	128	118
Job Facet**		
Communication	14	15
Nature of Work	18	20
Coworkers	17	16
Operating Conditions	11	14
Contingent Rewards	14	14
Benefits	17	14
Supervision	17	16
Promotion	12	12
Pay	16	15

\*Range is 36 - 216

\*\*Range is 4 - 24

broken down according to the five job categories. Of those respondents who identified themselves as a direct service staff (n=21), ranged from the lowest score of 77 to the highest score of 181. The median score was 122 and the mean score was 125. The respondents in the second category of clerical/support (n=9) yielded a range of 97 to 172. The median score was 130 and the mean score was 136. The third category, supervisor/manager (n=9), scores ranged from 106 to 179 with a median score 168 and a mean score of 155. The fourth job category was administrator (n=3). The range of scores in this category was 162 for the lowest and 189 for the highest. The median score of 189 and a mean score of 180. The final job category was technical/support staff (n=4). The range of scores was 114 for the lowest and 134 for the highest. The median score was 121 and the mean score 123. There was a correlation between overall job satisfaction and job category. The respondents within the categories of direct service staff, clerical/support and technical/support staff showed a similar concentration of lower scores compared to the categories of supervisor/manager and administrator.

#### Job Satisfaction and Tenure

The overall scores for job satisfaction were compared to job tenure. Tenure was collapsed into four categories:

1. 0-7 years
2. 8-14 years
3. 15-21 years
4. 22-27 years

The total number and percentage of responses that fell within the first category was 15 (n=15) of the 46 returned surveys (or 33%). The second category response was 14 (n=14) or 30%, the third was 11 (n=11) or 24% and the fourth was six (n=6) (or a 13% frequency rate). When the tenure was compared to the overall job satisfaction scores the outcomes were quite distinct. In the first category of tenure, the range for the overall job satisfaction scores was 104 (77 being the lowest and 181 the highest). The median score was 121 and the mean score was 124. The range for the second tenure category was 72 (99 to 171) with a median score of 130 and a mean score of 130. In the third category, the range of scores was 92 (97 to 189) with a median of 153 and a mean of 150. The fourth and final category showed a range of 80 (109 to 189) median score of 163 and a mean score of 155. Therefore, the more years of tenure an employee has with their respective agency, the greater degree in the overall score for job satisfaction.

#### Job Satisfaction Facets and Tenure

Tenure was also compared to each of the nine job facets

to determine the correlation between the individual facets of job satisfaction and job tenure. As indicated previously, the range for the individual facet scores was 4 - 24. These individual facets were correlated to the four tenure categories.

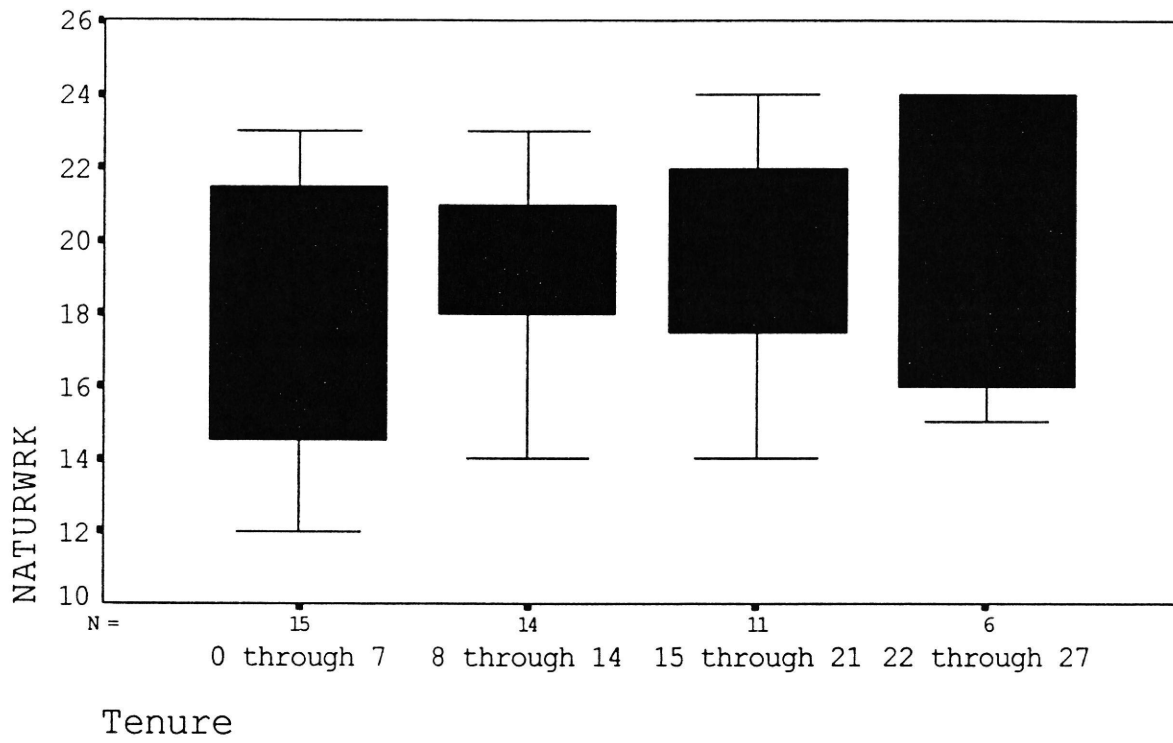
#### Tenure and communication

Comparing the first tenure category, range for the job facet of communication was 15, (five being the lowest and 20 the highest). The median score 11 and the mean score was 12. The second category of tenure when compared to communication showed a range of 8 (12 to 20) with a median of 13 and a mean of 24. The third tenure category ranged from 9 to 23. The median was 17 and the mean score was 17. The fourth category showed a range of 11 to 21 with a median of 17 and a mean of 16 (see figure 5.1). The Spearman rho was used to test the relationship between the two variables. The test showed a significance in the association with the correlation = .003, (two-tailed),  $p = .006$ . This indicates a strong association between the employees with the longest length of tenure and their level of satisfaction to the job facet of communication.

#### Tenure and nature of work

In the first category, figure 5.2 shows the minimum score was 12 and maximum was 23, with a range of 11. The

Figure 5.2: Tenure Categories by Nature of Work

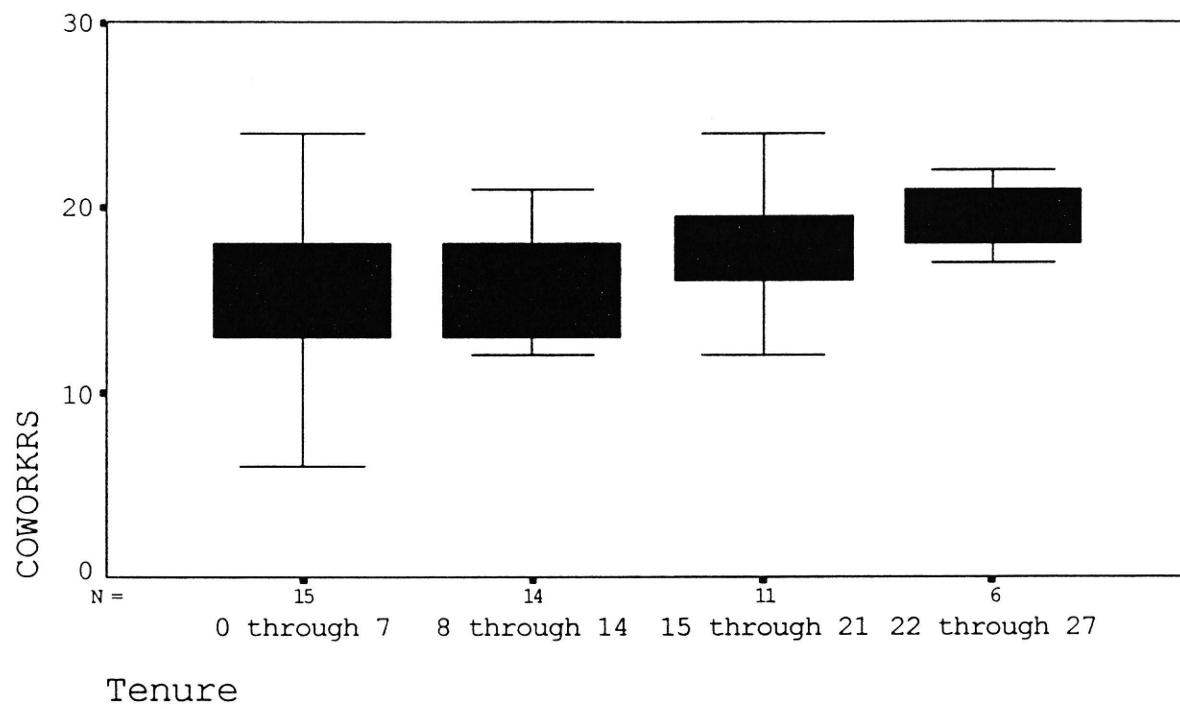


median of 19 and a mean of 19. The third category's range was 10 (14 for the lowest score and 24 for the highest score). The median was 21 and the mean for this category was 20. In the fourth and final category of tenure showed a range of 9 (15 to 24). The median was 23 mean and the was 21. The Spearman rho was used to test the relationship between the two variables of tenure and the facet of nature of work (correlation = .061, significance (two-tailed), reported at  $p = .064$ . There is no significance in the association of tenure and the nature of the work.

#### Tenure and coworkers

When comparing tenure categories to the facet of coworkers, the first category showed a range of 18 (6 to 24). The median was 16 and the mean score was 16. The second category of tenure yielded a range of 12 to 21 and a median and mean score of 16 respectively. For the third tenure category's range was 12 (12 to 24). The median was 18 and the mean was 18. In the fourth category, the range identified in figure 5.3 was five (17 to 22) with a median of 20 and a mean of 20. Spearman rho non-parametric statistical testing was used to test the relationship between the two variables. The test showed a significance in the association with the correlation = .031, (two-tailed),  $p = .024$ . This indicates a strong association

Figure 5.3: Tenure Categories by Coworkers





between the two variables of tenure and coworkers.

#### Tenure and operating procedures

The following present the ranges, median and means of the comparisons between tenure and operating procedures as seen in figure 5.4. The range for the first category was 13 (6 to 19) both with a median and mean of 11. The range for the second category was 14 (4 to 18) with a median and mean of 11. The third category produced a range of 13 (8 to 21). The median and the mean was 13. The fourth category's range was 10 (6 to 16). The median score was 14 and the mean score 13. Spearman rho non-parametric statistical testing was used to test the relationship between the two variables and showed no association (correlation = .189, (two-tailed),  $p = .166$ ).

#### Tenure and contingent rewards

The following are the ranges between the scores, the median and mean in comparing the categories of tenure to the job facet of contingent rewards (see figure 5.5). The first category had a range of 20 (4 to 24) with a median of 10 and a mean of 12. The second category's range was 9 (9 to 18), a median of 13 and a mean of 13. The third tenure category showed a range of 15 (8 to 23), with a median of 18 and a mean of 16. The fourth and final category yielded a range of 12 (12 - 24). The median was 17 and the mean

Figure 5.4: Tenure Categories and Operating Procedures

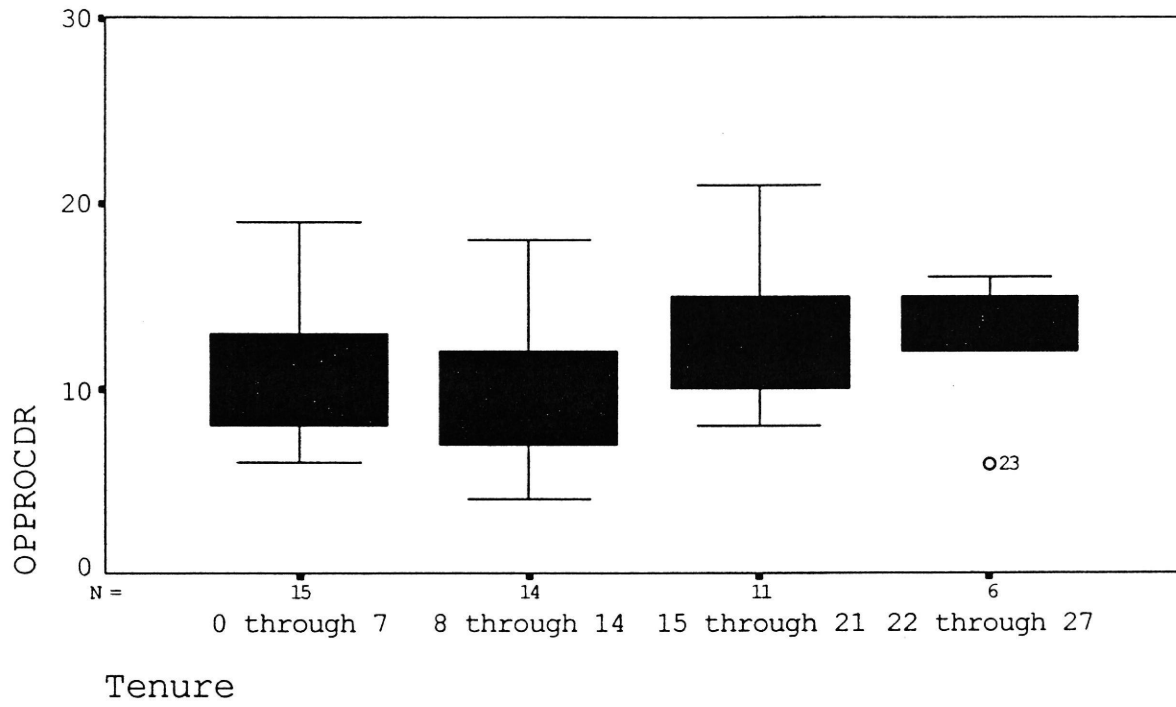
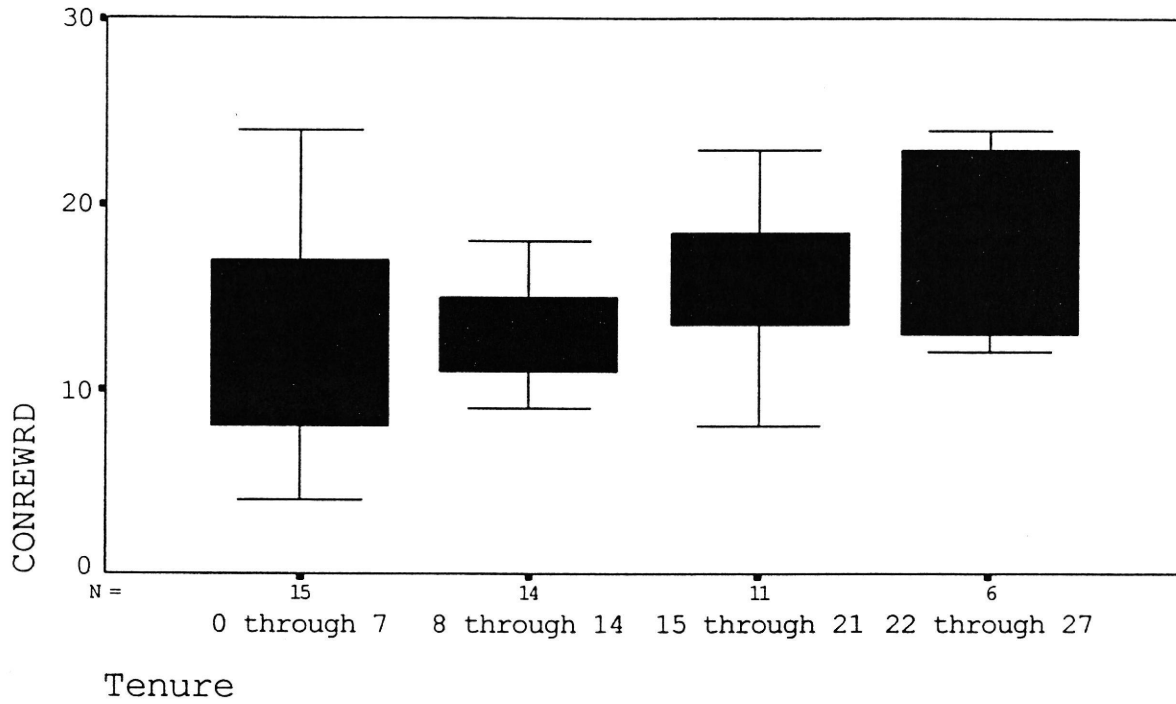


Figure 5.5: Tenure Categories by Contingent Rewards



score 18. Spearman rho statistical testing was used to test the relationship between the two variables. The test showed a significance in the association with the correlation = .008, (two-tailed),  $p = .006$ . This indicates a significant association between the two variables of tenure and contingent rewards.

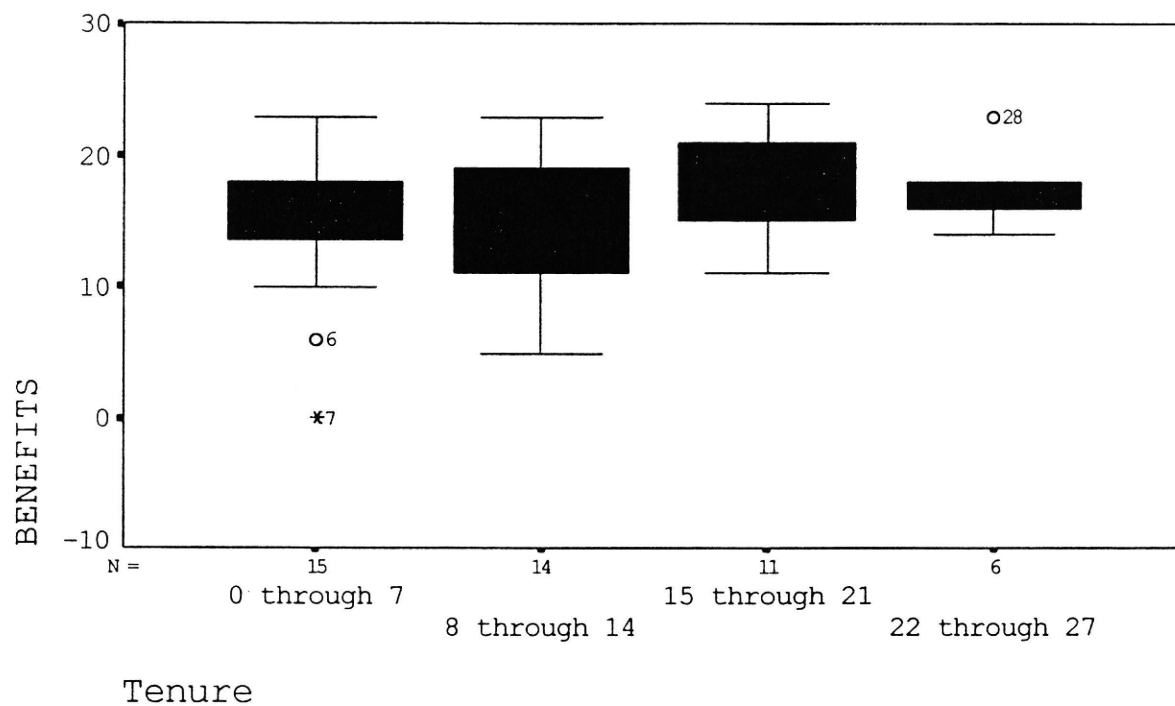
#### Tenure and benefits

When comparing the four categories of tenure to fringe benefits, the following scores were produced as seen in figure 5.6. The first category's range was 19 (4 to 23). The median score 16 and the mean score was 15. The second category had a range of 18 (5 to 23), a median of 18 and a mean score of 16. The third category's range was 13 (11 to 24). The median was 17 and the mean 18. The fourth category's range was 9 (14 - 23) with a median of 17 and a mean of 18. Spearman rho was used to test the relationship between the two variables. The test showed no significance in the association with the correlation = .102, (two-tailed),  $p = .207$ . This indicates no significant association between the two variables of tenure and fringe benefits.

#### Tenure and supervision

When comparing the categories of tenure to the job facet of supervision, the first category of tenure showed a

Figure 5.6: Tenure Categories and Benefits



range 20 (4 to 24). The median score was 13 and the mean score 14. In the second category had a range of 18 (5 - 23). Both the median and mean had scores of 18. The third tenure category's range was 17 (7 - 24), the median score was 20 and the mean score was 17. The range in the fourth category of tenure was 12 (12 - 24). The median was 22 and the mean 20. Figure 5.7 illustrates these findings.

Spearman rho testing was used to test the relationship between the two variables. The test showed a significance in the association (correlation = .034, (two-tailed),  $p = .034$ ). This indicates a significant association in the two variables of tenure and supervision.

#### Tenure and promotion

The categories of tenure when compared to the job facet of promotion yielded similar ranges as in the previous comparisons as seen in figure 5.8. The first tenure category showed a range of 16 (5 to 21). The median was 13 and the mean was 13. The second category had a range from 10 (4 to 14), a median score of nine and a mean score of nine. In the third category, the range 16 (6 to 22) and a median of 12 and a mean of 13. The final category of tenure had a range of 15 (6 - 21). The median was 16 and the mean score was 15. Spearman rho non-parametric testing was used to test the relationship between the two

Figure 5.7: Tenure Categories and Supervision

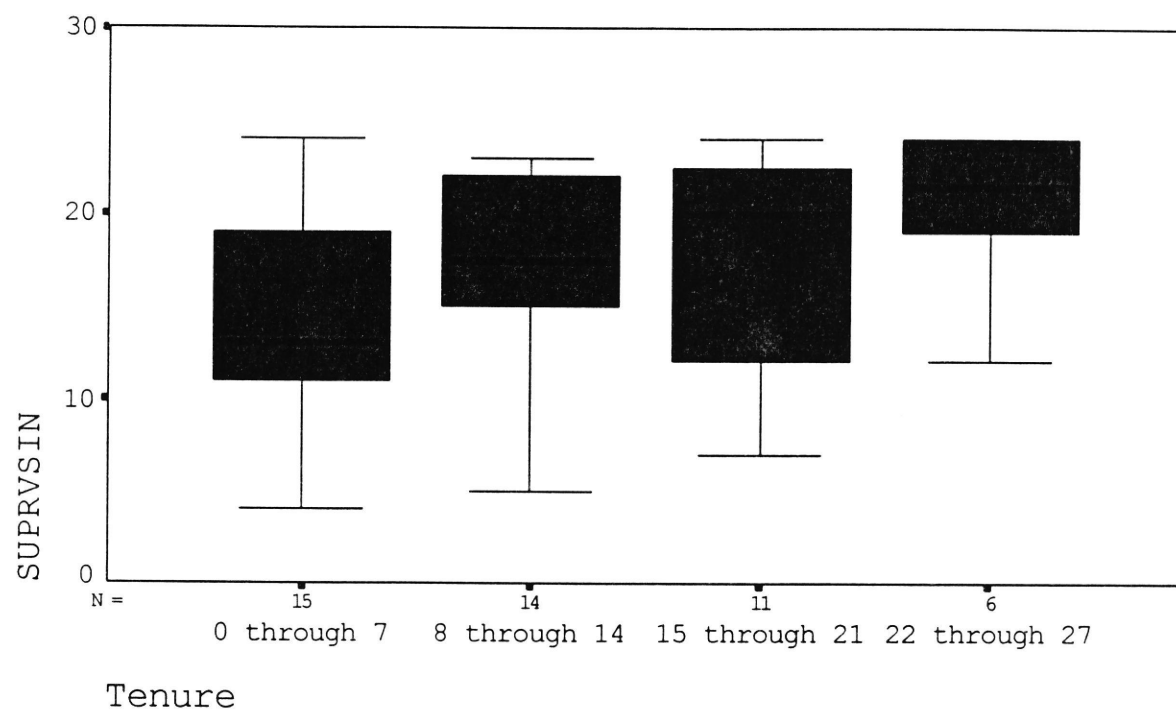
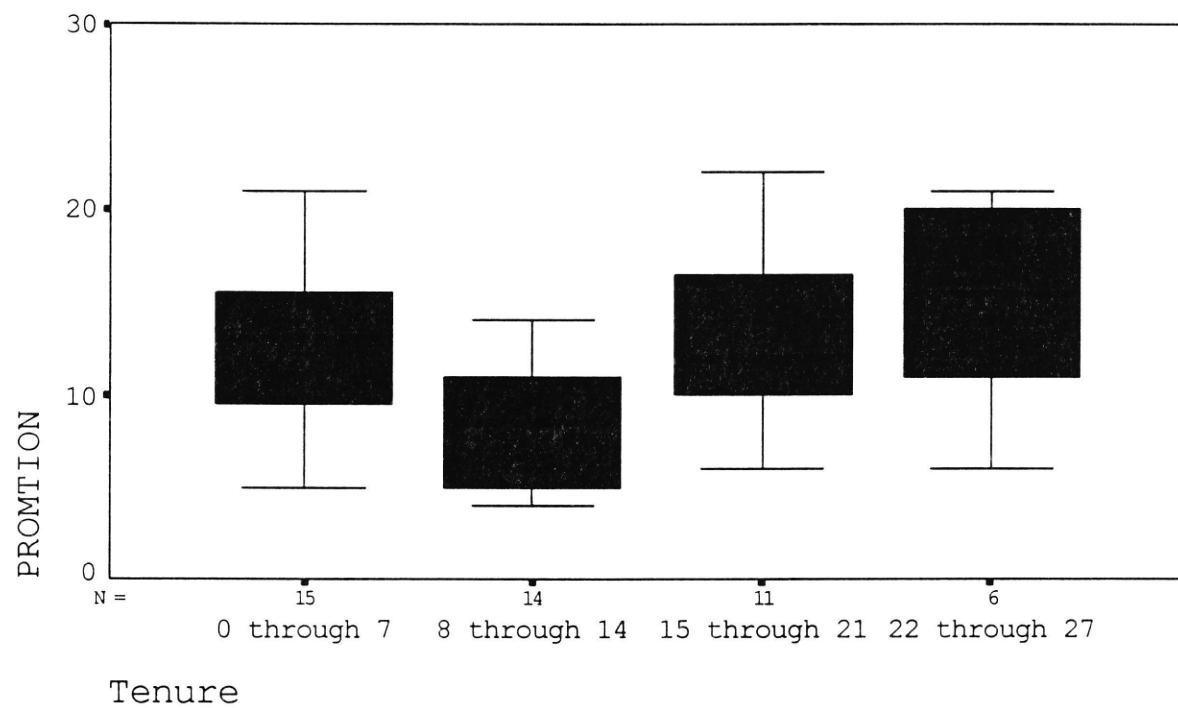


Figure 5.8: Tenure Categories and Promotion





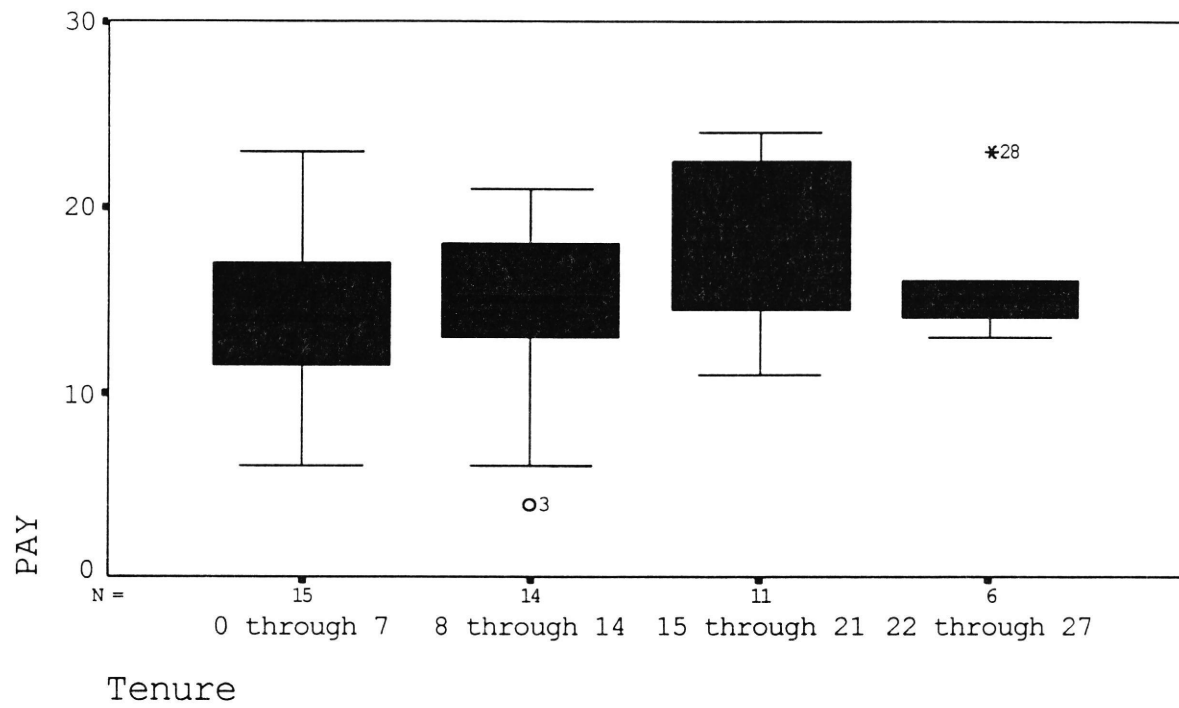
variables. The test showed no significance in the association (correlation = .289, (two-tailed),  $p = .434$ ). This indicates no significance in the association between the two variables of tenure and promotion.

#### Tenure and pay

The correlation of the categories of tenure and pay yielded minimal results as illustrated in figure 5.9. In the first category of tenure, a range of 17 (6 to 23) was found. The median was 14 and the mean was 14. The second category's range was 17 (4 - 21), a median of 15 and a mean 15. The third category had a range of 13 (11 - 24). The median score was 18, the mean score 18. The fourth category had a range of 10 (13 - 23). The median score was 15 and the mean score was 16. Spearman rho testing showed no significance (correlation = .081, (two-tailed),  $p = .117$ ). This indicates no significant association between the two variables of tenure and pay.

The non-parametric statistical test used to determine the correlation was the Spearman rho. Between the variables overall job satisfaction and tenure, the significance (two - tailed) reported an association at  $p = .003$ . This correlation revealed a significant relationship between job satisfaction and tenure overall. Spearman rho was also used to test the relationships between job

Figure 5.9: Tenure Categories and Pay



category and overall job satisfaction. There was also a significant relationship showing a (two-tailed) value of  $p = .025$ . There was no significance in the correlation between tenure and job category,  $p = .101$ , when these variables tested with the two-tailed Spearman rho. Table 5.3 identifies those variables that show a significant association in the testing.

#### Summary

This chapter presented the results of the study. A description of the sample population was presented. The mean scores in the comparison of dependent and independent variables were presented, followed by box plot charts. The final section of this chapter presented the results of non-parametric statistical tests to determine the correlation between the variables of the study. The preceding chapter will provide an interpretation of the study findings. This will be followed by strengths and limitations of this study, implications of the findings relating to social work practice and policy and conclude with suggestions for future research.

Table 5.3: Significant Statistical Findings In The relationship between Job satisfaction and Job Tenure.

Variables	Spearman rho	Chi-Square
Job Category		
Job Satisfaction	p = .025	22.26, df=4, P≤.0002
Overall Job Satisfaction		
Job Tenure	p = .001	15.00, df=1, P≤.0001
Job Tenure		
*Communication	p = .006	*
*Coworkers	p = .024	*
*Contingent rewards	p = .006	*
Supervision	p = .034	24.22, df=18, P≤.148

\* Not enough cases

## CHAPTER VI

### DISCUSSION

This study explores the relationship between job satisfaction and tenure among workers in the two work settings of public social services and private social services. As previously discussed, there is agreement among past studies as to what job satisfaction is, yet various in their individual definitions and constructs (Rice, Near & Hunt, 1979). Further, there does appear to be varying degrees of acceptance as to the definitions used to identify the variables that make up job satisfaction. What does appear to be concluded is that there are many different ways to assess job satisfaction as well as many varying approaches that can be used to determine satisfaction either from the Individual or by the organization (O'Reilly, Chatman & Caldwell, 1991). This relationship was researched by first assessing the degree of overall job satisfaction of the workers by the agency in which they were employed. Job satisfaction was also explored among the five positions: direct service staff, clerical/support, supervisor/manager, administrator, and technical/support staff. Job satisfaction was then compared to the dependent variable of tenure and its four

categories to determine the degree of relationship between the two. Finally, the nine facets of job satisfaction (pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, coworkers, nature of work and communication) were compared to tenure to determine if there was any significant relationship. In the following section, a summary of the findings are discussed. This is followed by a discussion regarding the strengths and the limitations of this study. Implications for social work practice will be addressed, concluding with suggestions for future research.

#### Summary of the Findings

The findings from this study are presented by the independent variable and its association to each dependent variable. The study's findings were:

##### Job Satisfaction and Agency

- There was no significant association between job satisfaction and agency.

##### Job Satisfaction and Job Category

- Those individuals in the job categories of direct service staff, clerical/support and technical/support staff were less satisfied in their jobs than those in the job categories of supervisor/manager and administrator.

### Job Category and Tenure

- Those individuals in the job category of direct service staff were more likely to fall within the tenure categories of one and two (0 - 7 yrs. & 8 - 14 yrs.).
- Supervisors/managers and administrators had a higher concentration within the tenure categories of three and four (15 - 21 yrs. & 22 - 27 yrs.).
- Non-parametric statistical testing reported no significant association between the variables of job category and tenure.

### Job Satisfaction and Tenure

- Those individuals who had less years in their respective agency were more likely to have a lower degree of job satisfaction.
- As the tenure increased among the individuals so did the degree of job satisfaction.
- Spearman rho testing showed a significant association between the variables job satisfaction and tenure.

### Job Satisfaction Facets and Tenure

#### Communication:

- As the tenure increased so did the degree of satisfaction with communication.
- Those who were in the fourth category of tenure (22 - 27

yrs.), were less satisfied with communication than the third category (15 - 21 yrs.).

- The third category of tenure was the most satisfied with communication followed by the fourth and the second.

#### Nature of work:

- There was an increase in the median of satisfaction to the nature of work as tenure increased.
- There was no significant association between the variables of nature of work and tenure.

#### Coworkers:

- Overall those who have more tenure were more satisfied with their coworkers than those who were in the three previous categories.
- Non-parametric statistical testing showed a strong association between the variables of tenure and coworkers.

#### Operating conditions:

- Spearman rho testing reported no significant association between the variables of operating conditions and tenure.
- Satisfaction with the operating conditions showed a minimal increase as the length of tenure increased.

#### Contingent rewards:



- Those who had the less tenure were less satisfied with the contingent rewards than those individuals who had more tenure.
- Among the fourth category of tenure, there was a decline in the degree of satisfaction with contingent rewards than in the third category.
- Non-parametric statistical testing showed a significant association between the variables of contingent rewards and tenure.

#### Benefits:

- Those individuals who had been with their agency for 8 - 14 years showed a higher median degree of satisfaction with the facet of fringe benefits than those in the other categories and yet there was no significant association.
- Spearman rho statistical testing showed no significant association between the variables of fringe benefits and tenure.

#### Supervision:

- Those who were employed 0 - 7 years felt less supported by their supervisors and were less satisfied.
- As tenure increased, so did the degree of satisfaction with the supervision received.

- Spearman rho testing showed a significant association between the variables of supervision and tenure.

Promotion:

- Those individuals who had 8 to 14 years of tenure were less satisfied than the others with promotions opportunities.
- Those individuals with 8 - 21 years of tenure felt less challenged in their jobs than others.

Pay:

- There was no significant association between the variables of pay and tenure.
- As tenure increased, so did the degree of satisfaction with pay.
- Those who had 22 - 27 years of tenure were less satisfied with their pay than those who had 15 to 21 years on the job.

### Discussion

The literature reviewed identified two determinants to job satisfaction which were the environment and the individual. Both of these determinants play a key role in the establishment of internal and external forces that help the individual in the development of their perceived degree of job satisfaction (Kristof, 1996). The literature

reviewed also discussed job tenure and its relationship to job satisfaction. Previous studies conclude that job tenure is an outcome or result of job satisfaction (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). It was also discussed which environmental and individual variables influenced the likelihood of increased job tenure. This study explored the same determinants of job satisfaction, but focused on the individual worker's perception. This study specifically assessed the individual characteristics or facets of the job to determine what facets of job satisfaction had the most influence on the worker's tenure in the two agencies of private and public social services. This study found there was a strong association between job satisfaction and job tenure among both agencies. There was not however, any significant difference between the two agencies. It was also determined that direct service staff's, clerical/support staff and technical/support staffs were less satisfied in their work than managers/supervisors and administrators. More specifically, The job satisfaction facets that were identified as important in determining the length of tenure for the various individuals were communication, coworkers, contingent rewards and supervision. The degree of satisfaction for these facets was identified low and as areas for enhancement within both

agencies.

The literature reviewed discussed the importance of the interaction between the environment and the individual when determining job satisfaction and increasing the tenure of the workers (Spector, 1997). Work Adjustment theory, the primary theory utilized in this study, identified the various factors that affect the interaction in the relationship between the work environment and the worker. Making the necessary adjustments can increase the degree of satisfaction thus, increasing the length of tenure. To do this one must be aware of the specific characteristics of the environment and of the personality, values and needs of the worker and adjust according to the perceptions of the two. The results of this study clearly identify the job facets that are perceived by the individuals within the respective agencies as important in determining their overall job satisfaction and to their length of tenure. It further points out the specific facets that can be enhanced to reduce the likelihood of turnover while increasing the overall satisfaction among the employees.

#### Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to this study that need to be taken into consideration. First, this study was done at one point in time. Participants may have responded

differently if surveyed at a later point in time. This study did not take into consideration other external factors outside of the respective agencies control such as economic issues, political climate or macro-policies outside the realm of the agencies surveyed.

Another limitation would be the credibility of the participant. Though the survey was done anonymously and outside of the respective work environments, it is highly probable that responses could have been given that fit the social norm (social desirability).

Another limitation to this study would be that the job satisfaction and tenure were surveyed solely from the individual's perspective. The environmental working conditions were not assessed thus, excluding the work environments perspective as to whether the individuals were meeting the environment's needs.

Still another limitation would be the size of the sample taken. The sample was small ( $n=46$ ) and was taken from only two types of social service agencies. This makes it difficult to make generalizations outside of the sample. A larger sample size most likely had different correlation statistical results (Babbie & Rubin, 1997). Based on the data provided, conclusions regarding the private agency data could not be legitimately made due to the number of

responses.

Finally, this study was strictly quantitative. Inclusion of a qualitative methods would have made the study more inclusive and provided more specific detail as to what particular issues within the various job satisfaction facets the individual respondents liked or disliked as applied to their respective agencies. Since this study was strictly quantitative, we can only confirm a cause and effect between the variables that job satisfaction results in job tenure.

#### Implications for Social Work Practice

Legitimate implications for social work practice are provided by this study. It identifies the particular facets within the two work settings that are perceived as deficient and significant for change to enhance the overall job satisfaction and job tenure. It also provides topics for further exploration if the agency chooses to enhance their job satisfaction and tenure among its employees. The study further identifies the key determinants and stresses the importance in assessing the internal and external forces that influence the work environments relationship with their workers. Further, the use of qualitative data would allow for more supported conclusions for further research than could be drawn from quantitative data alone.

Areas of policy and program development can benefit from the results of this study as well. Implications for social policy and program development that focus on organizational design that focus on meeting the needs of the organization and their workers can improve the overall service delivery of the organization. For example, agencies that develop and implement policies that strengthen and enhance the skills and meet the need of their employees will model this positive strengths approach through its employees to the clients being served. It can also reduce the costs of training through reduced turnover and decreased absences among its employees due to stress related illness caused by unfriendly working conditions.

### Conclusions

This study provides legitimate results in the relationship between job satisfaction and job tenure among the workers in the two job settings of private and public social services. More specifically, this study identifies the particular facets of job satisfaction seen as important for increasing the tenure among the employees within the respective agencies. Also, this study stresses the importance of taking into consideration the environmental factors and individual worker characteristics when looking at the enhancement of the agencies overall service

delivery.

Future research is needed in this area. Exploring the full extent of external and internal factors affect on job satisfaction and tenure of employees is needed to assist social service agencies in reducing turnover and maintaining a quality workforce. The integration of qualitative and quantitative research methods would further assist in identifying how other extraneous factors and specific individual perceptions affect job satisfaction and job tenure.



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APPENDIX A

JOB SATISFACTION SURVEY  
**Jamey M. Whitney**  
**Augsburg College**  
**IRB # 97-54-03**

PLEASE CIRCLE THE RESPONSE THAT BEST REPRESENTS YOUR  
SITUATION

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

1. NUMBER OF YEARS WITH YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYER? \_\_\_\_\_

2. ARE YOU CONSIDERED:

Worker  
1

Clerical/Support Staff  
2

Supervisor/Manager  
3

Administrator  
4

Other \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please describe)  
5

APPENDIX B

<b>JOB SATISFACTION SURVEY</b>  <b>Jamey M. Whitney</b> <b>Augsburg College</b> <b>IRB # 97-54-03</b>							
	<b>PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH QUESTION THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT.</b>	<small>Disag ree Very Much</small>	<small>Disag ree Mode rately</small>	<small>Disag ree Sligh tly</small>	<small>Agre e Sligh tly</small>	<small>Agre e Mode rately</small>	<small>Agre e Very Much</small>
1	I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	There is really too little chance for promotion on my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	I like the people I work with.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	I sometimes feel my job is meaningless.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	Communications seem good within this organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	Raises are too few and far between.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12	My supervisor is unfair to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14	I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15	My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16	I find I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of people I work with.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17	I like doing the things I do at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18	The goals of this organization are not clear to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19	I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20	People get ahead as fast here as they do in other places.	1	2	3	4	5	6

21	My supervisor shows too little interest in the feelings of subordinates.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22	The benefit package we have is equitable.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23	There are few rewards for those who work here.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24	I have too much to do at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25	I enjoy my coworkers.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26	I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27	I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28	I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29	There are benefits we do not have which we should have.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30	I like my supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31	I have too much paperwork.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32	I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33	I am satisfied with my chances for promotion.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34	There is too much bickering and fighting at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35	My job is enjoyable.	1	2	3	4	5	6
36	Work assignments are not fully explained.	1	2	3	4	5	6



## APPENDIX C

### Consent Form

April 9, 1998

#### Dear Participant:

You are invited to be in a research study regarding worker's perception of job satisfaction and job tenure. You were selected as a possible participant because of the job setting in which you work and the product/service your agency/facility provides. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Jamey Whitney as part of my Social Work Master's Thesis at Augsburg College.

#### Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to determine the to which job satisfaction contributes to job tenure. The survey questions seek to reveal the relationship job satisfaction has for worker's in various positions and in various work settings.

#### Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following:

1. Read the consent form and retain it for your records if desired.
2. Complete the survey as they pertain to your unique situation which will take approximately 10-20 minutes.
3. Place the completed survey in the self-addressed stamped envelope, seal it and mail it as soon as possible upon completion.

#### Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

The study may have psychological risks because it asks questions regarding your feelings and thoughts regarding your level of job satisfaction at the place you work.

If at any time you feel discomfort, you are encouraged to discontinue your participation in this study. You are asked to place your survey in the self-addressed stamped envelope, seal it and mail it.

The direct benefits to participation is that all participants will receive a 2 dollar honorarium for their participation in the study.

#### Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. The researcher will not ask for the names of the participants to be put on the survey they complete. The surveys will remain anonymous. You will administer and complete the survey on your own and return it to the researcher in a sealed unmarked envelope.

A final summary of the results will be shared with your agency. **NO INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES WILL BE SHARED.**

Raw data will be destroyed no later than January 10, 1999.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with your employer or Augsburg College. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

**Contacts and Questions:**

The researcher conducting this study is Jamey M. Whitney. The researcher's advisor is Dr. Maria Dinis. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Dr. Maria Dinis at (612) 330-1704.

**Statement of Consent:**

By completing and returning this survey, you consent to participate in this study.

**Please keep this copy for your records.**

Thank you for Your Participation,

Jamey M. Whitney  
Graduate Student and Principal Investigator  
IRB # 97-54-03

APPENDIX D



TERRY E. BRANSTAD, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
MASON CITY AREA OFFICE  
CERRO GORDO COUNTY  
22 North Georgia  
Mason City, Iowa 50401  
Tel: (515) 424-8641  
FAX: (515) 424-1759

CHARLES M. PALMER, DIRECTOR

March 12, 1998

Michael Schock, Ph.D., Chair  
Augsburg College Institutional Review Board  
Augsburg College  
2211 Riverside Avenue  
Minneapolis, Mn. 55454-1351

Dear Dr. Schock:

This letter will serve as documentation that Jamey Whitney discussed with me his research project to determine correlation between job satisfaction and job tenure. I am supportive and have authorized Jamey to request the voluntary participation of approximately 40 of our employees during non-work time to complete his job satisfaction survey. I understand he will apply the results of the survey to research in completing his thesis requirement for graduate studies.

Sincerely,

Allen Grooters  
Mason City Area Administrator  
Iowa Department of Human Services

AG:elb  
copy: Jamey Whitney  
AG98\WhitneyJ

APPENDIX E



**NORTH IOWA  
COMMUNITY ACTION  
ORGANIZATION**

An Equal Opportunity Employer

P.O. Box 1827 • Mason City, Iowa 50402

Richard W. Goerdt, CPA  
Executive Director  
Telephone (515) 423-8993

Michael Schock, Ph.D., Chair  
Augsburg College Institutional Review Board  
Augsburg College  
2211 Riverside Avenue  
Minneapolis, MN 55454-1351

Dear Dr. Schock:

This letter will serve to authorize Jamey M. Whitney to conduct a Job Satisfaction Survey with 35 employees of North Iowa Community Action Organization and apply the results to a research study he needs to validate the thesis requirement of his graduate studies.

Sincerely,

Dick Goerdt  
Executive Director

cc. Jamey M. Whitney

FAMILY HEALTH CENTER  
Telephone (515) 423-5408

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER  
Telephone (515) 423-7766

HEAD START  
Telephone (515) 423-5406

WEATHERIZATION  
Telephone (515) 424-6453

APPENDIX F

APAAPP

aA



Jamey Whitney  
127 West North Street  
Manley, Iowa 50456

Professor Michael Schock  
Institutional Review Board  
Augsburg College  
Minneapolis

April 15, 1998

Dear Jamey Whitney,

We received final revisions to your research proposal and IRB application, 'Determining the relationship between job satisfaction and job tenure'. You have fully satisfied the requirements from the full board review. Therefore, you have official approval from Augsburg's institutional review board.

Your IRB number is 97-54-03. Please use this number in all official documentation in your research. Include this number in your consent form. Do well in this interesting research.

Sincerely,



Michael Schock

cc. M. Dinis

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

Campus Box #51 • 2211 Riverside Avenue • Minneapolis MN 55454 • Tel. (612)330-1189 • Fax (612)330-1493

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Minneapolis, MN 55454